agreeing with me in demanding that the geometrical shall be acknowledged as another style. Mr. Sharpe, for instance, in his work on "Decorated Window Tracery" (to which I cannot allude without adding a word of very high commendation), having defined the difference between the windows in what used to be called Early and Late Decorated, adds,—"We have only to carry our inquiries a step further, in order to satisfy ourselves that these points of difference are not confined to the windows alone, but extend also to the buildings to which these windows respectively belong; and, having arrived at this point, we shall not be long in coming to the conclusion that there exists a large and important class of buildings, characterised by the geometrical forms of their window tracery, which has hitherto been treated as belonging partly to the Early English, and partly to the Decorated style, but which is, in reality, distinct from both, and pre-eminently entitled, from the number and beauty of its examples, to separate classification."

Again, I find that Mr. Freeman, in his "History of Architecture," where he divides all Gothic architecture into two great classes, Discontinuous and Continuous, actually places his one broad line of demarcation, where at present all distinction is sometimes denied, between Geometrical and flowing Decorated.

FIRE AT THE TRAVELLERS' CLUB-HOUSE.

It is known and admitted that of all *accidental* fires, at least three-fourths occur by reason of the too close approximation of timber to the chimney-flues; and that on searching houses damaged by fire (but not consumed), the medium of communication is, in nine cases out of ten, a beam or girder, resting, perhaps, on a corbel fixed in the chimney-jamb; or else it can be traced from the plugs driven into the withs between the flues, which, when the chimney takes fire, being like touchwood, and desiccated by the constant action of heat, become charred, and so smoulder through the fissure caused by their insertion until the fire reach a crevice at the junction with the floor boards or skirting.

This slumbering and inert fire may last for hours, or even days, until the access of air gives it vitality, and so most commonly, long after fires in chimney-flues have been extinguished, the fire breaks out. Every architect and builder who has pulled down old structures is well aware that timbers are often found charred and literally burned through near old fire-places, and that the safety of the house has been due only to the confined seat of the element—*i. e.* to the absence of air to feed it. I have found oak girders and joists so burned; and in one case (a house in Park-lane) that the sinking of a floor near the chimney was caused by the combustion of at least eighteen inches of an oak beam—9 inches by 8! This house may be said to have been affected with inflammation in the ribs (a very common complaint), and there were no less than three such charred beams at different fire-hearths. That house was certainly crazy, having been 150 years built, but being only held on a short lease, it was refitted, and the diseased or tuberculated parts cut out, so that at present the cobble looks well to the eye, and may bide its time.

But how a modern structure like the Travellers' Club should have been so constructed in our days of improvement and solidity, it is hard to conjecture. Iron girders, cements, and incombustible materials are plenty and cheap—fire-proof houses the order of the day—and yet in a great club palace, where there was no stint of money, the most vulnerable part of the edifice must in this instance have been carelessly left exposed to the attack of the most insidious of enemies.*

The use of cements for skirtings is a sure defence against fire through the medium of plugs; but the most certain safeguard against fire from chimneys is the terra cotta, or terra metallic tube. It is impossible that fire can be communicated to the wood work where these linings are used, for the earthenware tube or flue being cased in masonry or brickwork effectually protects the wood fittings, even although they come in contact with it; and seeing that where the strictest surveillance is exercised by the clerk of the works, carpenters will drive plugs and then cover them with skirting, there seems to be no other mode of securing perfect immunity from the destruction of life and property than by using the ironstone or terra cotta flue. Buckingham Palace, Mr. Hope's mansion, the Marylebone and several other hospitals, have these flues throughout, and most public buildings now in progress employ them. Osborne and Windsor Castle have them also: in the latter many of the old chimneys are being gutted and so encased.

At the time the Travellers' club was founded (about twenty years back) these flues were not known, for the first building in which they were used was the Consumption Hospital, of which the Messrs. Bird, of Hammersmith, were the builders, and this was erected in 1843-4.

As fires occasioned by the ignition of soot in chimneys usually break out some hours after the flue is cleared and the engines have departed, and ordinarily by night, and when the inmates have retired to rest, life is more frequently perilled from a fancied sense of security; therefore it is the office of The Builder, from his watch-tower, to admonish the public where lies the danger: by precaution you are secure. QUONDAM.

* On inquiry we learn that the fire did originate in a beam communicating with a flue, but, it is said, the beam did not originally communicate with the flue directly: and it is thought that a heavy bell used in sweeping the vent had broken the brick-work which was in face of the beam.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

The London and South-Western directors are about to enter into contracts for the maintenance of all the ways and works of the main line and branches, of some 250 miles, for a period of five years.——Surveys for a line from Bangor, on the Chester and Holyhead, through the north-west of Wales, are now being made, and should the landowners be favourable, the line will be commenced at once, and made during the winter from Bangor to Port Dinorwic.——Mr. S. M. Peto, Mr. E. Leathes, of Normanston, and other gentlemen, visited Beccles lately for the purpose of fixing a site for the station of the proposed railway from Reedham to Halesworth. The party proceeded to Halesworth for the same purpose.——The South-Eastern line from Ashford to Hastings and St. Leonard's, 28 miles, completing the coast communication throughout Kent, is now ready for opening. It has been eighteen months under construction, and has cost about 560,000*l.*, or at the rate of 20,000*l.* per mile for the double line of way. The distance from Ashford to Rye is about 16 miles, and the cost from Rye to St. Leonard's has been 252,000*l.* Towards Lydham-hill and Hastings the works have been of a very heavy character. To avoid deep cuttings Mr. Barlow, the engineer, has lengthened the tunnels, of which there are four, of a total length of 3,685 yards, the Ore tunnel being 1,380 yards; Mount-pleasant, 320 yards; Hastings, 765 yards; St. Leonard's, 1,320 yards. The line between Tunbridge-wells and Hastings, which will complete the South-Eastern Railway system, is also nearly finished.——The Huddersfield joint station building is now nearly completed, and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company have removed into their own portion of it. The refreshment-rooms are fitted up with gas cooking apparatus, crane joint from kitchen to dining-rooms, &c.——"It will scarcely be credited," says a contemporary, "that the threepenny fares of the Bayswater omnibuses produce a larger *mileage* revenue than the London and North-Western Railway. Yet such is the fact. The length of road which the forty-one omnibuses traverse is about seven miles, mileage receipt about 102*l.* If we took into account what all the other omnibuses which travel on the same road produced, the receipt would be infinitely higher." We do not exactly see the force of such calculations, however: mileage for seven miles in town is one thing,—for some hundreds of miles overhead throughout the country it is quite another thing: moreover, there must be many a seven miles' run on the North-Western, as implied in this very calculation, that would show a far higher mileage receipt than this on the one hand, while on the other, there must be shorter runs in the metropolis where the receipts on "all the omnibuses" would indeed be vastly "higher." But what does all this come to, after all, in comparative statistics, unless it be one way of running up the Bayswater "scrip," while running down that of the North-Western? At all events, it is rather too much like the celebrated rule-of-three question—if a barrel of sprats cost 5*s.* what will a whole field of cucumbers come to?——We are glad to perceive that the law still continues to discountenance and ignore the unconstitutional attempt of some of the railway companies to exercise the inquisitorial power of opening parcels, and of charging extra for carriers' parcels, which they have no right to do, although there is a clear determination on their part to seize and monopolise the business of carriers altogether, after dragging them off the old and obsolete roads, and on to the new public highways, of which these companies are really but the paid trustees. In a recent case at the County Court, Windsor, a verdict was given against the South-Western Company, and in favour of a carrier, on the ground that the Act did not prohibit the making up of several small parcels into one large one; and further that it gave them no power to open any parcel, without doing which it was evidently impossible for the company to declare with certainty what were its contents. Undoubtedly the subject is of great importance, and involves many grave points of consideration. Whether railway companies are to have the inquisitorial power of opening parcels to examine the contents; whether they are to be permitted to double with impunity the Parliamentary tariff; whether they are to overstep the lawful boundary of their constitution and become monopolist traders on a gigantic scale, are the questions raised in these proceedings.——A contrivance for the palliation or prevention of railway accidents has been submitted for experimental use to the principal railway companies by Messrs. Brett, the projectors of the submarine telegraph between England and France. The apparatus is a pocket communicator for the guards or engine-drivers, which, on the instant of an accident, can, by the aid of a small roll of wire, be so connected with any point of the main line of telegraph from the train or carriage by the guard himself, that communications may be easily sent to announce or guard against accident at every station on the railway. The idea of such a telegraph, as our readers may recollect, is not new. A modification of it, long since noted in our "Jottings," consisted in the permanent attachment of an indicator to locomotives or trains, so contrived with relation to the telegraphic apparatus on the line as to announce, by self-action, the advance of the train at fixed intervals onwards to the stations ahead.——Mr. Stephenson has examined the eastern and southern valleys of Switzerland, preparatory to forming a railway. He has, says the *Helvétie*, expressed the opinion that the best line would be one leaving Yverdon, following the marshes of the Orbe, passing by a tunnel through the Mormont at Entreroches to the valley of Venoge, and following that valley to the end.

Patent Galvanized Iron Company.—An injunction was recently granted at the Lord Chancellor's house, *in causa Siordet and Others v. Symonds and Walker*, to restrain the defendants from galvanizing iron or copper according to the plaintiffs' invention. The defendants showed no cause, being satisfied they could not resist the injunction. The sole interest of the company appears to be now vested in Messrs. C. W. Tupper and G. B. Carr.

Foaty House.—A leading architect in Ireland states that the design lately given in the Builder under this head, was not carried out. The drawings, we ran only say, from which our perspective was collated, were forwarded to us, as such, by Mr. J. Morrison, brother of the deceased architect. On applying to Mr. Morrison for an explanation, this gentleman says, "The design, &c. sent to you forms one of a number of designs contained in the portfolio of my late brother, and I was, and still am, under the impression that the building at 'Foaty' was erected in conformity with it." Mr. Morrison has not a just appreciation of the importance of preserving the integrity of the Builder, or we would not have forwarded the drawings without being fully assured of their correctness.

* Script. MS. etc.